

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 AGRE-00 COME-00 STR-07

TRSE-00 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 /039 W

-----121763 160424Z /64

R 151712Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6105

INFO AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

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SAN JOSE FOR AGATT

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, PN

SUBJECT: 1978 MEAT IMPORT PROGRAM

1. VIA DIPLOMATIC NOTE #DOI-496, PANAMA HAS ACCEPTED ITS QUOTA UNDER THE 1978 VOLUNTARY RESTRAINT PROGRAM FOR IMPORTATION OF BEEF INTO THE U.S. THE NOTE ALSO STATED THAT PANAMA IS "IN A CONDITION TO COMPLY" WITH ITS QUOTA.

2. EMBOFF DISCUSSED MEAT SITUATION WITH THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE NATIONAL CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION, RAFAEL ZUBIETA, AND LEARNED THAT THE CATTLEMEN ARE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT FULFILLING THE QUOTA. LOW PRICES FOR MEAT, BOTH IN PANAMA AND IN THE U.S. WILL PROBABLY CAUSE A DECREASE IN PRODUCTION FOR BOTH MARKETS. ZUBIETA OPINED THAT PANAMA WILL BECOME A NET IMPORTER OF BEEF IN THE NEAR FUTURE IF THE GOP PLACES CURBS ON EXPORTS AND KEEPS DOMESTIC PRICES ARTIFICIALLY LOW BECAUSE PRODUCTION WILL FALL. HE CLAIMED THAT PRODUCTION COSTS HAVE SKYROCKETED WHILE THE OFFICIAL PRICES HAVE REMAINED, FOR POLITICAL REASONS, UNREASONABLY LOW. ZUBIETA STRESSED THAT PANAMA WOULD HAVE NO PROBLEM FILLING THE 1978 QUOTA IF DOMESTIC PANAMANIAN AND U.S. MEAT PRICES WERE HIGHER, AND

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THERE WERE FEWER GOP REGULATORY CONTROLS ON CATTLE AND MEAT PRODUCTION.

3. THE CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION HAS LONG BEEN A VOCAL CRITIC OF GOVERNMENTAL MEDDLING IN THE BEEF INDUSTRY, AND GOP OVERCONTROL HAS BEEN ITS EXCUSE FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE QUOTA. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT LOW

U.S. PRICES FOR BEEF ARE AT THE ROOT OF THE QUOTA SHORT-
FALL, ESPECIALLY IN REGARD TO LAST YEAR'S EXPORT PER-
FORMANCE. GOVERNMENTAL OVERCONTROL, WHILE VERY REAL,
IS MORE A CONVENIENT SMOKE SCREEN THAN A REAL OBSTACLE
TO INCREASED PRODUCTION FOR EXPORT.

JORDEN

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Message Attributes

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Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEATS, IMPORT QUOTAS
Control Number: n/a
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Draft Date: 15 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Format: TEL
From: PANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780366/aaaacdiz.tel
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Message ID: ae4cce6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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